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Money

Habad protests redeployment at Hebron rally

BILL HUTMAN

HABAD, a movement that helped Benjamin Netanyahu win the premiership, last night brought thousands of its supporters to Hebron to protest against the prime minister's apparent intention to redeploy the IDF in the town.

Speaker after speaker at the gathering in the plaza adjoining the Cave of Machpela called on the prime minister to bold onto Hebron.

"No one can question our right to Hebron," Rabbi Zev Slonim said. Slonim, a leading Habad rabbi, praised "the courage of the Jews of Hebron."

Another speaker appealed directly to Netanyahu, declaring that "no one has the right to give up any part of the Land of Israel."

Habad spokesman Menachem Brod said 65 buses from all around the country brought the group's supporters to Hebron for the movement's annual gathering.

Hebron was chosen as this year's location to show Habad's opposition to redeployment, Brod said.

"What Bibi apparently plans to do in Hebron is not good for the Jews," Brod said, playing on the Galilee's pro-Netanyahu election slogan. "Bibi is good for the Jews."

Dozens of policemen and border policemen patrolled the event, with security forces on alert around the Jewish community of Hebron.

"Jerusalem, Hebron and the Land of Israel were given to the People of Israel," Rabbi Nafali Roth said.

Habad leaders recently met with Netanyahu to press him not to redeploy in Hebron, but they left the meeting disappointed.



Habad supporters rally outside Hebron's Machpela Cave last night to protest against Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's plans to redeploy the IDF in the city. (Brian Hendler)

Mordechai: Despite arrests, threat of suicide attacks still exists

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

DEFENSE Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said that despite the arrest of a number of Islamic Jihad activists, the real threat of a suicide attack still exists.

"Easing the closure was the correct thing to do, Islamic Jihad activists have been arrested," Mordechai said. "But there are still [terror] cells. We are trying in every way possible to foil them. We can't say for certain that this threat has been neutralized, so the alerts are still in effect."

Troops have arrested 12 suspected members of Islamic Jihad in Hebron, Palestinian sources said yesterday. Nine of those detained were rounded up in a sweep of student dormitories in the town on Monday, the sources said.

Channel 2 said 17 Palestinians from Islamic militant groups were arrested in recent days on suspicion they were planning attacks against Israel.

Army Radio said three

Palestinians from the northern West Bank were arrested yesterday trying to infiltrate into Israel with an axe and several knives.

Mordechai said that despite the threats, the government decided to try to return life in Israel and the territories back to normal. Some 50,000 Palestinian laborers are allowed into Israel to work. An additional 2,500 merchants are also being allowed in from the territories.

Mordechai said the Palestinian Authority was doing a reasonable job fighting terror, but could do better.

"The Palestinians are cooperating reasonably, but I can't say they are doing their maximum. They could do more and we believe they should do more," he said. "We are demanding that they do more."

Speaking to defense reporters, Mordechai said that an agreement on Hebron was virtually wrapped up and blamed the delay on "Palestinians' stubbornness, which I don't understand."

The minister said Israel was



standing firm on the issue of being able to foil attacks on the Jewish residents of Hebron and to ensure that the Jewish community there would not be "strangled" with Palestinian-imposed restrictions on development.

Deputy Chief of Staff Maj.-Gen. Ma'ayan Vilna'i told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday that the IDF had removed administrative units from Hebron but reinforced operative forces there.

The IDF also has begun carrying out hand-over patrols with the PA to familiarize them with the area, Vilna'i said.

Vilna'i, however, rejected claims that the IDF had virtually completed its redeployment in Hebron. He said the IDF is waiting for orders from politicians. He estimated the redeployment itself would take up to two days and said the changes so far had been logistical.

In Jerusalem, talks between Israel and the PA continued last night, though officials said there was no indication of a breakthrough.

US Ambassador Martin Indyk joined Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh and Yasser Abed Rabbo at the discussions in the Laromne Hotel, while another team conferred at the downtown office of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's aide Yitzhak Molcho.

Earlier in the day, Netanyahu reviewed the situation with Mordechai and Foreign Minister David Levy. Officials said there were no plans for a meeting between Netanyahu and PA Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Liat Collins and Batsheva Tsur contributed to this report.

Senior government official:

Defense budget safe from extra cuts

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

THERE will be no further cuts to the defense budget, a senior government source said yesterday, though Finance Minister Dan Meridor is considering an additional NIS 2 billion budget cut that could be put before the Knesset this month.

"An additional cut to the state budget will be very significant, but it won't include the defense budget," the senior source said.

Speaking to military reporters, the senior source said there has been an erosion in the IDF's capability and its stock of weaponry and that this has to be turned around.

"The previous government was prisoner to a conception that peace was security. This included concessions which should have actually obligated an increase in the IDF's might," the source said. "We have to stop this erosion."

Speaking to reporters after addressing yesterday's annual Treasury budget department seminar, Meridor said his ministry is assessing likely 1997 income levels, and current thinking is that revenues will be some NIS 2b. lower than the budgetary requirement.

"I am still not sure of the exact figure," Meridor said. "However, if we know enough details before the end of the debate [on the budget], we'll do it before the end of this year. If not we'll do it next year, but that's just a technical issue. I have no doubt there is a need for this additional cut to ensure we stay on the right path." (Story, Page 8)

The senior source said the NIS 800 million cut from the defense budget would be the last, stressing this does not necessarily mean the government is inclined to approve an increase for defense spending.

The comments came amid increasing calls, accompanied by warnings of war, by IDF top brass to approve a NIS 1.7b. increase in the defense budget.

But the senior government source said the Syrian navy and air force are weak and that the IDF "could take care of their armor." The main threats from Syria, he said, come from a surprise attack by Syrian commandos on the Golan Heights and from surface-to-surface missiles on Israel's heartland.

However, he said, tensions with Damascus and chances of a war with Syria have subsided.

He said Israel made efforts to expose the Syrian troop movements to eliminate the element of surprise and refrained from rushing troops to the border, a move which would have risked escalating tensions. Israel also moved to reduce tensions through diplomatic channels.

"There can still be an attempted surprise attack by the Syrians, but that is irrational and I believe the Syrians are completely sane," the senior source said. "The trend of the last month is one of calm, not escalation."

The source said the situation with Syria is now one of "treading water" until a new US secretary of state is appointed, paving the way to resume peace negotiations with Damascus.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief of Staff Maj.-Gen. Ma'ayan Vilna'i, appearing yesterday before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, said that Operation Grapes of Wrath had proved itself.

"There is a large deployment of the IDF. Sometimes Hizbullah operates in one sector and sometimes in another," Vilna'i said. "This demands mobility of forces."

He said Hizbullah is largely abiding by the understanding reached after the operation and the Syrians are also interested in keeping the area calm.

David Harris and Liat Collins contributed to this report.

Mubarak says Azzam has confessed; Gov't denies it

BATSHEVA TSUR

SOURCES in Jerusalem last night denied Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's claim that Israeli citizen Azzam had "admitted" to spying for Israel.

"Only on Monday, Azzam denied all involvement in espionage activities during a court hearing," the sources said. "There was a representative from the Israeli embassy in the courtroom who heard him. Azzam repeated this also in an interview with Channel 2 the same evening."

Mubarak was quoted by the Middle East News Agency as saying: "The spy has confessed everything." The MENA report, carried by the Associated Press, added that the remarks were made when Mubarak inaugurated an irrigation system on the Nile.

Both Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister David Levy have said Azzam did not spy for Israel. A high-ranking government official said last Thursday that a thorough investigation revealed Azzam was not an agent for any Israeli security body.

Azzam, a mechanic at a joint Israeli-Egyptian textile plant, was arrested two weeks ago outside his Cairo hotel.

US vetoes Boutros-Ghali

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The US yesterday vetoed Boutros Boutros-Ghali for re-election as secretary-general by a 14-1 vote in the 15-member Security Council.

However, UN spokesman Sylvana Foa said the 74-year-old Egyptian would remain a candidate, setting the stage for a protracted battle in which the US has so far found itself diplomatically isolated.

Full report, Page 4

Judge: Holding-time of less than 24 hour for minors is too much work for me

EVELYN GORDON

JUDGE Aharon Melamed, president of the juvenile courts, created waves in the Knesset Law Committee yesterday when he said the law reducing the period that any suspect can be held without seeing a judge from 48 to 24 hours created too much work for him and his colleagues.

The committee exploded after Melamed asked it to increase the amount of time a suspect can be held without seeing a judge, saying this showed a shocking contempt for human rights on the part of a judge.

Melamed had been invited to speak to the committee about ways to make it harder for the state to arrest juveniles. He outraged MKs by saying that not only did he oppose many of their suggestions on the grounds that they would be too difficult to implement, he wanted the repeal of the 24-hour law. He said that, on this matter, he was speaking for all Magistrates Court judges.

"This is unbelievable," said Dedi Zucker (Meretz). "Even the police have accepted this. Only the court presidents do not. I consider it extremely grave that the courts should be the most conservative element [on this question]."

"Today there is not a single justice on the Supreme Court that deals with arrests in light of the legislature's instructions," put in Bar Association representative Avraham Bardugo.

"The principles are very nice, but you have to look at the implementation," Melamed retorted. "I suggest that instead of sitting on Olympus, you stick to reality."

"In my experience, no solution would ever be found if we always looked at 'reality,'" said Shlomo Shoham, the committee's legal advisor and a former judge. "We have to lead the way."

Yitzhak Kadman, head of the National Council for the Welfare of the Child, said minors are often physically or sexually abused in jail, and this has happened to those under "protective arrest" as well.

MKS agreed "protective arrests" must be made illegal. However, they seemed willing to consider a suggestion by State Attorney Edna Arbel to allow police to detain children in danger for a few hours.

Arbel told the committee that the Justice, Labor and Internal Security Ministries have been working for the past two years on a bill to make it harder to arrest minors, and the bill should be ready in about three months. This bill would forbid minors to be held for more than 12 hours without seeing a judge — a suggestion Melamed dismissed as unworkable. The bill also would require parents to be present at all remand hearings, and would grant the children the right to speak at such hearings as well. However, Arbel agreed with Melamed that a committee proposal to require a parole officer to be present at all remand hearings might not be practical.

Committee chairman Shaul Yahalom (National Religious Party) welcomed the Justice Ministry's initiative, but said the committee would also submit a private bill on issues where the two bodies did not see eye-to-eye.

One issue on which the two did agree was that it is essential to separate juveniles from adults, first-time from repeat offenders, and younger children from older children. The committee was pleased to hear that Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani has ordered the Prisons Service to begin constructing separate lock-ups for minors, though it is not clear when this will be implemented.

Kadman told the committee stories of minors who spent several days in jail for offenses such as stealing a bicycle or using a friend's credit card without permission. This is especially appalling given the horrible conditions in police lock-ups, he said.

"In my opinion, not a single minor should be arrested as long as the lock-ups look the way they do," he said, noting that he knew of one district attorney who refused to remand even boys accused of gang rape for this reason. "They aren't even suitable for an adult. They aren't even suitable for a beast."

Kadman told the committee that 3,500 to 4,500 juveniles are arrested each year, with 88 percent detained for over 12 hours and 73% for more than 24 hours. However, police representative Dep.-Cmdr. Elinor Mazoz said these figures were too high. She said only about 60% of minors are held for more than 24 hours.

Oldest human fossils with stone tools found

THE oldest fossil of human ancestors to be found together with stone implements and animal bones have been discovered in northern Ethiopia by American, Ethiopian and Israeli scientists who have been exploring the region since 1990.

The human fossil consists of the upper jaw of an early *Homo*, the broad genus to which modern humans belong. Previously discovered sites — all in Africa — in which

hominid fossils have been found in layers that included stone tools were estimated to be no older than 1.85 million years. The latest discovery is believed to be 2.3m. years old.

On November 2, 1994, Ali Yesuf and Maumin Alahandu, local Ethiopians on the fossil-collection team, found two halves of an upper jaw on the side of a hill.

"The instant we fit the two halves together, we knew we weren't dealing with an apelike *Australopithecus*," said Prof. William Kimbel, a US scientist who was on the site at the time of the discovery and has since led the effort to examine and date the finds.

The discoveries originate from an

early period about which little has been known, and so provide important information about the cultural and evolutionary development of our ancestors.

The team, headed by Kimbel of the Berkeley, California, Institute of Human Origins, includes Erella Hovers of the Hebrew University and Prof. Yoel Rak of Tel Aviv University. Other members are Ethiopians and researchers from the State University of New York-Stony Brook and the University of Washington. Their findings are to be reported in the December issue of the *Journal of Human*

Evolution and were released yesterday at a press conference in Addis Ababa.

The fossil, chopping tools, stone flakes and mammal-bone fragments were found on the surface of a barren hill near a dry streambed in the Hadar Formation, a 200-meter-thick sequence of rocks and the home of the famous "Lucy" human ancestor found several years ago.

The volcanic-rock fragments were analyzed by the single-crystal laser-fusion method of potassium-argon dating, which yields very precise ages for volcanic rocks and has revolutionized the science of dating events in evolutionary history.

"Lucy," dating back some three million years, is of the species *Australopithecus afarensis* and had an apelike appearance. "Lucy" was not known to have made stone tools. The new fossil discovery is believed to be some 700,000 years younger than "Lucy" and much more closely resembles modern man, but it is still somewhat different from fossil discoveries of the *Homo* species of later periods.

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Rahel Dayan's mother says daughter dropped charges because of threats

DAVID RUDGE

POLICE intend to question Tsomet MK Haim Dayan as soon as possible in connection with allegations that he beat his wife at their Migdal Ha'emek home on Saturday.

The time and place for the interview will be coordinated with Dayan, police sources said. It was expected that the necessary procedures would be completed soon.

Dayan's wife Rahel lodged a complaint with police in Migdal Ha'emek on Saturday that she had been beaten by her husband during an argument at their home.

Even though she withdrew the complaint the following day, police are required to investigate cases of alleged family violence.

Rahel's mother, Jacqueline Dadon, claimed yesterday in an interview on Israel Radio's morning talk show "It's All Talk" that her daughter withdrew the complaint because Dayan had threatened her.

"Rahel maintains it was for the sake of the children. For the sake of truth, it wasn't because of the children. Rahel was almost certainly frightened of him and he probably threatened her," Dadon charged. She said that the couple's relationship had been very strained for the past three months and that MK Dayan did beat his wife on Saturday.

Rahel Dayan went to Afula's Ha'emek Hospital on Saturday and received treatment in its emergency ward for what hospital sources described as relatively minor injuries, including bruises on her neck, legs, and other parts of her body.

After withdrawing the complaint, Rahel Dayan went to stay with her husband in Jerusalem and they announced their apparent reconciliation in a joint interview on Channel 2.

MK Dayan, who is deputy Knesset speaker and a former policeman, gave his wife a kiss that appeared to be somewhat reluctantly received, and maintained that they were making a new start. Rahel Dayan, for her part, said she had agreed to give her husband and their marriage a second chance. The couple has four children.

"I saw them on the television and how he bugged her and kissed and I can only hope that it was real - that this picture was not a lie because what I understand is that



Tsomet MK Haim Dayan apologizes to his wife Rahel on Channel 2 on Monday night. (Channel 2)

he did it in order to ward off the media," Dadon said.

"For three months while there was a dispute between them, all the family, friends, neighbors and rabbis tried to get them to make peace. He rejected all appeals, saying he wanted a divorce.

"Rahel was pregnant [during this period] and because of all the pressure and anxiety she had a miscarriage. A neighbor called him to tell him. He didn't react. He didn't come and wasn't with her at the time [of the miscarriage].

"Suddenly after the blows, he sent his brother to take Ruchaleh to the hotel [in Jerusalem]," she said.

Dadon said Dayan had tried to evade the question of whether he actually beat his wife, because of his public position.

"He did beat her. There were signs blows on her body and the fact is that there's a medical report," she said.

Dadon said that according to her daughter's version of events, the argument on Saturday stemmed from an ongoing row after MK Dayan cut off the telephone at their home.

"She was alone with the four children at home with no telephone. Her brother helped her to buy a cellular phone. The argument afterwards, when he came home on Friday was over the cellular phone," Dadon said.

She maintained, according to what her daughter had told her, that Dayan, was very angry and Rahel called for the help of neighbors.

"They tried to calm things down, but he didn't want to hear. He didn't calm down and the blows started," Dadon said.

Netanyahu calls for mandatory sentences for domestic violence

LIAT COLLINS

PRIME Minister Binyamin Netanyahu strongly criticized the judiciary for its "sometimes ludicrously lenient sentencing" of violent men, during a speech to the Knesset yesterday, which the house had devoted to discussing domestic violence.

Netanyahu also declared the creation of a state authority on the status of women to coordinate actions among the different groups and ministries dealing with women's issues.

Knesset committee meetings and plenum discussions focussed on the subject of abused women. MK Haim Dayan (Tsomet), accused of beating his wife on Saturday, was absent in person, although his name cropped up in discussions in the corridors and cafeterias. Netanyahu stated his support for the idea of minimum sentences for violent offenders, an idea that has met with opposition among much of the judiciary.

"I think we have run out of patience with the derogatory attitude which is expressed towards the victims in unjustifiable sentencing. I categorically intend to demand the judicial system in Israel adapt to the norms the public wants to determine," he said.

Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi announced the establishment of a public commission chaired by Supreme Court Justice Eliezer Goldberg to examine the issue of minimum sentences for domestic and sexual violence.

Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai (Shas) said he would support creating centers for abusive

men where they would undergo psychological counseling like that at drug rehabilitation centers.

Three bills were discussed in the plenum calling for better deterrence and stricter punishments, including increasing the period an allegedly abusive partner can be barred from his family.

Earlier in the day, the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women held a special meeting with a large number of guests to mark the occasion.

Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon said he would help further any legislation against domestic violence and would not apply the quotas on private members bills.

Committee chairwoman Yael Dayan (Labor) said 17 women had been murdered by their partners or relatives in 1996. She noted that unlike the trend abroad, in Israel most murdered women are killed by relatives, their husbands or partners, and not in street violence.

She stressed the need for action against men who abuse their wives mentally, even if they are not physically violent, saying this is a first stage. She also praised the voluntary organizations which deal with women's issues.

President's wife Reuma Weizman called for better educational programs and hostels for abusive men. Sara Netanyahu called for a fight against all types of violence, not just domestic violence, and greater awareness. Ludmilla Tichon, the speaker's wife, called for greater follow-up and help for women who have been abused.

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Dayan accuses ITV news editor of extortion

MK Haim Dayan (Tsomet) has written a complaint to Avigdor Lieberman, director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, accusing Israel Television news editor Rafik Halabi of trying to blackmail him into giving Channel 1 an interview together with his wife.

Dayan, whose wife accused him over the weekend of beating her, wrote to Lieberman as the Prime Minister's Office is responsible for the state-run channel.

In his letter Dayan said Halabi had asked him for the interview, but when he refused on the grounds that his wife did not agree to it, Halabi attacked him "with rudeness and an angry tone." Dayan said Halabi threatened to interview "anyone who wanted to get at me if I didn't agree to be interviewed."

Dayan said that such threats and attempts to blackmail him into appearing "borders on the criminal." He said he would file a police complaint against Halabi and stressed he himself had not been questioned yet by the police and that his wife had withdrawn her complaint.

Halabi responded last night by calling Dayan's allegations "science fiction. He's apparently just trying to divert attention from what he did to his wife," said the news editor.

Meanwhile, five MKs wrote to Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon yesterday asking that Dayan no longer preside over plenum sessions as

Newsline

with Orit Earon-Shoval

Orit Earon-Shoval is assistant director of the Glickman Family Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Domestic Violence.

Might any man be violent toward his wife?

There's nothing in a man's physical appearance that can tell you he's abusive at home. A man can function very well as a lawyer or director of a company and be very violent at home. Many abusive men have witnessed violence between their parents or suffered it themselves as children. Life with a tyrannical parent is also abusive.

Ironically, a man who resolves domestic conflict with force is weak - he suffers from poor self-image. The outside world imposes sanctions for violent behavior and he knows he may lose something by it. But he sees his home as his own territory where he can do what he wants.

How do abusive men control their wives? Does domestic violence always involve physical abuse?

Physical violence and sexual violence - forced sexual relations with one's wife - are crimes punishable by law. But there is also verbal violence, constant harping and humiliation. Control of the money gives him a lot of power, too. She may earn as much as he does, but if she doesn't have enough money to go out, her house becomes a prison.

Where there is physical violence, the other types of abuse usually exist too. But if a woman says her husband is tyrannical and that she lives in constant fear, we regard her situation as being as dangerous as that of a woman whose husband threatens her with a knife. Today the police take all forms of domestic violence seriously.

Isn't it paradoxical that a man can be so out of control at home and in perfect control at work?

When a man "loses control" and smashes things at home, he destroys only the things to which his wife has some emotional attachment. He never breaks the TV, because then he won't be able to watch the sports program. So he's never totally out of control.

What makes a violent man come for treatment?

He never comes of his own accord. He will come only if his wife has complained to the police, if she has obtained a court order barring him from the home, if she has started divorce proceedings, or if she has left home and disappeared. That's why we urge women to turn to the police. True, some 20 percent of violent men can't learn new ways. These include psychopaths and the mentally ill. But it's possible to help the remaining 80 percent. Esther Hecht

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US vetoes second UN term for Boutros-Ghali

THE US yesterday vetoed Boutros-Ghali's bid for a second term as UN secretary-general. The Security Council vote was 14-1.

Boutros-Ghali had refused to withdraw his candidacy, even though the US had been threatening a veto for months. "This is just the opening round," UN spokesman Sylvana Foa said yesterday. "He's in it until the Security Council makes a final decision."

Although Egypt was the nation that submitted his candidacy, there were also reports that support for the Egyptian diplomat was fading. On Sunday, Mohammed Heikal, a commentator in the government-run newspaper *Al-Ahram*, asked Boutros-Ghali to say "without hesitation or sorrow" that he would step aside, according to yesterday's editions of *The New York Times*.

David Pelge, the charge d'affaires at the Israeli mission to the UN, had no comment on the

MARILYN HENRY
NEW YORK

Security Council vote, saying, "Israel is not obliged to take a position" at this time.

The secretary-general, a Coptic Christian with a Jewish wife, was the only high-ranking Egyptian to accompany President Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem in 1977.

Although the US offended many of its allies when it began its campaign last summer against Boutros-Ghali, it was not clear what the impact of the veto would be on Washington's relations with Cairo.

"The Americans and Egyptians told us that they don't see this as a bilateral issue," said a high-ranking Israeli source at the UN.

The two countries said they were careful that this not develop into a bilateral crisis.

If the US prevails in ousting

Boutros-Ghali, he would be the first secretary-general denied a second term - although there have been contentious votes to reinstall a predecessor. African nations have insisted that their continent deserves two terms in the post, as has been the tradition.

It is expected to take weeks to find a consensus candidate as a replacement, and the US was said to be in favor of a selection formula weighted in favor of African candidates. The president of the Security Council, President Nugroho Wisnumurti of Indonesia, said he would ask African ambassadors to submit names of alternative African candidates before scheduling another vote.

Technically, under the UN charter, a simple majority of the 185-member General Assembly could override the Security Council and continue Boutros-Ghali's tenure after his current term ends on December 31.

Channel Tunnel blaze puts eight in hospital

News agencies

CALAIS - Eight people were taken to hospital after fire broke out on a train carrying trucks through the Channel Tunnel, the first big accident since the opening of the Anglo-French link two years ago, officials said yesterday.

Seventy fire-fighters from Britain and France, in special breathing suits, put out the blaze aboard the England-bound freight train after an all-night battle, a first test of systems designed to counter everything from earthquakes to terrorists.

The 34 truck drivers and crew were evacuated from toxic fumes after a blaze apparently broke out in a truck one-third of the way through the 50-kilometer trip from Coquelles, France, to Folkestone, England.

It was not immediately clear what caused the fire. There were reports that hazardous material was being transported on the freight shuttle, but Eurotunnel identified it as polystyrene plastic and said the material was not connected to the fire.

Eight people were taken to hospital, two of them in serious condition including the train driver.

Pope meets Castro, papal trip to Cuba is planned

News agencies

VATICAN CITY - Pope John Paul II accepted Cuban President Fidel Castro's invitation to visit his communist island next year, during a historic meeting yesterday between Cold War rivals.

"Holy Father, I hope to see you in Cuba soon," chief Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls quoted Castro as telling the Pope at the end of a 35-minute meeting in the Pontiff's frescoed private study at the Vatican palace.

The Polish-born Pope, one of the key influences on the fall of communism in eastern Europe, responded: "Thank you, my blessings on the Cuban people."

The Pope and Castro talked privately in Spanish during the audience, after the veteran revolutionary arrived at the Vatican under some of the heaviest security ever seen for a visiting head of state.

"President Fidel Castro renewed an invitation to the Holy Father to visit Cuba, specifically during next year, 1997," Navarro-Valls told reporters after the audience.

The pope has agreed to go and "the only thing missing is the date in 1997," Navarro-Valls said.

Vatican officials said the Pope's acceptance of the invitation implies that the Cuban government has acquiesced to the usual conditions for papal trips - that the pope can travel anywhere and meet with anyone he wants to.

Cuba, one of the world's last communist states, is the only Spanish-speaking country in Latin America which the Pope has not visited. He is due to travel to Brazil next October, when a Cuba visit could be added.

"Holy Father, this is a great honor for me," Castro, who was schooled by the Jesuits as a child, told the Pope as they met on the threshold of the papal study.

His visit, though billed as private, had all the trappings of an official state visit to the Vatican, including a 25-minute tour of St. Peter's Basilica, Christendom's largest church.

Navarro-Valls said most of the audience dealt with the role of the Roman Catholic Church in Cuba, where relations with the state have been sometimes frosty.

"They examined questions con-



Cuban President Fidel Castro shakes hands with Pope John Paul II during a private audience at the Vatican yesterday. (Reuters)

cerning the normalization of the conditions of existence of the Church in Cuba and in general the role of believers in Cuban national life," the spokesman said.

Shortly after Castro took control in 1959, Cuba was declared a socialist state. Some 350 Catholic schools were nationalized and more than 100 priests expelled. Freedom of worship and religious instruction are limited to church premises.

The restrictions on the Church now are similar to those in place in the Soviet Union and parts of eastern Europe until the collapse of the Iron Curtain.

Navarro-Valls said Castro discussed more political issues, such as "the development of Cuban society" and Cuba's position in the international community, at a separate 45-minute meeting with Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano.

The phrasing was an apparent reference to calls for democracy in Cuba and the end to the 34-year-old US embargo against the Caribbean island, which the Vatican has condemned several times. The issue of the US embargo on Cuba did not come up in the discussions, according to Navarro-Valls.

"The position of the Holy See is so clear, there was no need to elaborate on it," he said, noting that the Pope had opened the World Food Summit in Rome last week condemning the use of economic and food embargoes.

Navarro-Valls refused to discuss whether the issue of human rights was raised by the pope.

All media access for the meeting, the Pope's most significant since he received then Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in December 1989, was cancelled at an hour's notice.

Open Letter to Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel

Dear Sir,

Being a person with deep respect for the French state and its institutions and love and respect for the French people, I am duty bound to express my view. The recent visit of President Chirac to Israel should be considered as a great service to the people of Israel.

President Chirac was good enough to refer, as an example, to the present state of peace between Germany and France. Every Israeli should study the history of Alsace which was a battleground for two centuries.

The sacrifice that France was willing to make to maintain its dominance over this territory and to keep the border with Germany as far east as possible from the center of power in Paris is clearly illustrated by the monuments in every French city and village listing the names of the millions of Frenchmen who gave their lives protecting the interest of France.

The lesson is clear: Every nation defines its borders with centuries of wars. Lasting peace is possible only between nations sharing common values for the respect of democracy and freedom.

You and all Israelis should remember that it was President Chirac who in just the last twenty four months resumed the French nuclear testing on its Polynesian Island. Against all international disapproval, he pursued the interest of France and served notice to all possible hostile powers who dream of blackmailing France that France will not depend on other nations to protect its interest. In simple terms it is stated that France has the power and the will to defend itself and if need be, shall go to hell or heaven together with its adversaries.

His actions and his pronouncements are an admirable example of his pursuit of the interest of France which Israel should emulate.

The lessons and example of President Chirac should be interpreted by simply stating: "Don't do as I say...but do as I do".

President Chirac is the first French statesman who had the courage to admit openly that yes, there were Frenchmen and members of the wartime French governments who participated in the deportation of Jewish citizens. We should remember that it was the French people and their devotion to human values who frustrated the Gestapo and their own government to save 73% of the Jewish population of France and an unbelievable 84% of the children. We all should be grateful for their heroism and certainly I am, I had the good fortune to marry one.

If those faint-hearted tell you that what is possible for France is not possible for Israel, they should be reminded of the admirable achievement of the people of Israel in economic and military fields over the last fifty years - how they built a prosperous nation of 5,000,000 - admired and envied by many nations.

In today's world, numbers do not represent power. Power is knowledge and determination and the will to use it in the preservation of national interest.

Ultimately the future of Israel will be determined by the will and the fortitude of the people of Israel.

Mr. Prime Minister, don't let hostile opinions deter your policy of protecting the people of Israel and remember that every nation's foreign policy is directed at the preservation of its interest and not altruistic motivation.

When lectures are given to the State of Israel on the rights of all faiths in Jerusalem, remind them that you are the only power in Jerusalem who respects this principle. Ask them where they were in 1948 when the Legions of Jordan destroyed the synagogues in East Jerusalem, expelled its Jewish inhabitants and prevented Jews from praying at the holy site. Where were they in 1929 when the Jewish population of Hebron literally was exterminated and expelled and their temples turned into stables and they were prevented from praying at the burial grounds of their patriarchs?

The rights of the people of Israel to dwell, work and pray in security in Samaria, Judea or the Golan, wherever, in Jerusalem or Hebron, are not the pursuit of the veneration of graves like some would want us to believe but the pursuit of a safe national homeland for its children and the coming generations.

As an example of the history of France and all other nations eloquently demonstrate, nation building is sometimes a dirty job and fortunate are the children of the nations whose forefathers had the fortitude and the willingness to pay the price and the sacrifice to secure a safe homeland for their children and future generations.

I was born in Czechoslovakia. In my youth I had the fortune and the benefit of this wonderful democracy. I also had the personal experience of the tragic consequence of the Munich Peace Accord imposed on us.

Whenever you are under great pressure and feel the tribulation under the weight of your responsibility, remember the saying of Benes, our last President, after the war he expressed his feeling of guilt many times by stating "I feel guilty. I should have never given in to the pressures of England and France to accept the Munich Peace Accord. Anything that would have happened by refusing it could not have been worse than the tragedy befallen on our people."

History teaches us that Peace Accords do not secure borders, only secured borders guarantee peace.

Dear Prime Minister, the world is sick and tired of wailing Jews but it has the infinite goodwill and respect for the fighting Jews to secure a state of their own on their ancestral homeland.

May you have the strength and the wisdom to guide your people through these difficult times in their history.

Respectfully yours,

Alexandre Raab
Goodwood, Ontario
Canada

November 19, 1996

Palestinian given 12 years for 1977 hijacking

HAMBURG (Reuters) - A German court sentenced a Palestinian woman to 12 years in jail yesterday for her part in the 1977 hijacking of a Lufthansa passenger jet to Somalia and the murder of its pilot.

Soubaila Andrawes, 43, is the only survivor of four Palestinians who hijacked the German airline's plane.

The hijacking of the verdict had to be interrupted when she broke down sobbing after the presiding judge found her guilty of murder, attempted murder and extortion.

The prosecution had asked for a 12-year sentence, rejecting Andrawes's assertion that she was not responsible for shooting the pilot as it was the gang leader who pulled the trigger.

The group had hijacked the aircraft to back demands by German Red Army Faction guerrillas for the release of 11 of its members from jail during the notorious so-called "German autumn" of left-wing extremist violence.

Andrawes had been convicted in Somalia for the hijacking and sentenced to 20 years in jail, but was released after a year and went

home to Beirut. She moved to Norway in 1991 under a false name and was extradited to Germany last year after her identity became known, leaving her husband and daughter behind in Oslo.

Andrawes, who has said she would like to serve her term in Norway, may serve her 12-year prison term in a Norwegian jail with approval from the German court that sentenced her.

"The convict may apply to be transferred to Norway if she wants to," a Norwegian Justice Ministry spokesman said. "If Germany approves of it, we will not raise any objections."

Early in the seven-month trial Andrawes told the court how she took up the Palestinian cause after witnessing an Israeli bombardment of a Palestinian village in the mid-1970s. But in a closing statement last week, she called the hijacking a "crass and repulsive act" which could not be justified.

At the time the jet was commandeered in October 1977, RAF guerrillas were holding German industrialist Hanns-Martin Schleyer in a bid to get 11 of their

colleagues freed from jail. The hijackers backed that demand and also called for the release of two Palestinians jailed in Istanbul and a \$15 million ransom. When their demands were not met, they shot pilot Juergen Schumann in the head during a forced stopover in Aden.

A five-day ordeal for the remaining 86 hostages ended in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, the plane's sixth stop, when West German GSG-9 commandos stormed the aircraft. They killed all the hijackers except Andrawes, who was carried out of the plane on a stretcher making a victory sign. Hours later, their bid for freedom failed, three of the jailed members of the RAF committed suicide in their cells in Germany. Schleyer was killed the same day, and his body dumped in eastern France.

Andrawes gave prosecutors a lead in their bid to clear up one of the last mysteries of the RAF period by implicating Monika Haas, an alleged RAF guerrilla accused of taking part in Schleyer's murder and kidnapping as well as aiding the hijacking. Haas is now on trial in a court in Frankfurt.

US won't send troops to Zaire

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The US has tentatively decided not to send troops to Zaire and will instead provide military cargo planes to help fly humanitarian aid to refugees streaming home to Rwanda, the Pentagon said yesterday.

"At one point, it looked like we needed a security component" to protect the distribution of aid to refugees in Goma, Zaire, Defense Department spokesman Ken Bacon said. "Now it looks like we won't."

Instead, Bacon said, the US military already is setting up an air bridge to Kigali in Rwanda and will help fly in food and other supplies for distribution within Rwanda by the UN and other aid groups. US Air Force teams were already being moved to Entebbe, Uganda, and Kigali to set up a relay, he said.

President Bill Clinton agreed last week to send about 1,000 troops to Goma as part of an international military force under UN auspices. The American troops were to help secure the Goma airport and set up a safe corridor for refugees to return to nearby Rwanda.

Bacon said the movement of tens of thousands of refugees back to Rwanda in recent days had sharply reduced - and probably ended - the need for an armed security force.

Report: Britain knew Jews were targeted for atrocities as early as 1941

NEW YORK (AP) - The British knew as early as mid-1941 - more than a year earlier than previously acknowledged - that Jews were being systematically slaughtered by the Nazis, *The New York Times* reported yesterday.

Citing intelligence documents made public in Washington, *The Times* reported that in the summer of 1941, British code breakers detected Nazi transmissions from the Ukraine and Belarus that revealed the genocide.

The messages were stark: "July 18 - 1,153 Jewish looters shot; August 27 - Regiment South shot 914 Jews; the special action staff with police battalion 320 shot 4,200 Jews; August 31 - 2,200 Jews shot."

Many historians believe the messages signified the beginning of the Holocaust. The British intercepts, after being kept secret for more than 50 years, have only been made public in recent days by the National Security Agency, *The Times* said.

"What is perfectly clear is that British intelligence had absolutely definite information, not about all of Europe, but certainly about occupied parts of the Soviet Union," said Professor Richard

Breitman of American University in Washington.

Breitman was among those who pushed for declassification of the NSA documents.

In all, he and others have used the Freedom of Information Act to request the release of 1.3 million wartime documents by the NSA.

The Times said the intelligence agency released the documents to the National Archives.

Breitman said the newly released documents, combined with earlier British research, establish that the British knew Jews were being targeted for atrocities as early as September 1941, more than a year before Britain or the US have publicly acknowledged knowing the plight of European Jews.

By late 1941, "it was perfectly obvious" to the British "that the Nazis were executing every Jew they could lay their hands on," Breitman said.

It is unclear whether the British shared this information with the US, *The Times* said, although intelligence generally was shared during World War II. The US did not enter the war until December 1941.

UN finds fault with Sudan's probe of slavery

EVELYN LEOPOLD

PROBES by Sudanese groups into slavery and other human rights abuses glossed over available data and shed little light on the alleged horrors, according to a UN report released over the weekend.

Gaspar Biro of Hungary, the special UN human rights rapporteur for the Sudan, said he found it encouraging that the government had appointed committees to investigate abuses and had opened a center for traumatized children in Khartoum.

But he said many answers he received to queries were incomplete and did not adequately deal with his earlier reports of killings, deportations, abductions, looting and enforced mass displacements against civilians by all sides in the country's long-running civil war.

"The investigation of alleged cases of disappearances as well as other previously reported violations and abuses taking place in the context of the armed conflict in southern Sudan and the Nuba mountains, cannot be considered by the international community as being conducted in a satisfactory manner," he said.

The Khartoum government has been battling the rebel southern-based Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) for the past 13 years. More than a million people have died in the conflict since Christian and animist rebels took up arms for greater autonomy from the Moslem, Arabized north.

Biro made his fourth trip to the country in August after being banned for two years on charges

that he insulted Islam. He spent that visit mainly talking to government panels and groups set up to explore human rights and slavery.

Last summer the Khartoum government said it was "deeply concerned" about allegations of slavery and would investigate.

A group traveled south in August to look into the alleged disappearance of 256 people from Totar after the army took control of the village in 1995. They found 33 people who had left the town but said they had done so voluntarily, their possessions having been looted by the SPLA.

The group, made up of jurists from Sudan's Special Investigation Committee, did inform Biro that many Nuba people were working in the households of military officers but said they were there "on a voluntary basis."

But Biro said his own and other reports indicated that the Sudanese army and local militia it backs had been ordered to collect women, children and the elderly and to take them to areas controlled by the government.

In Geneva on Friday, the Christian Solidarity International group said the slave trade was increasing and that tens of thousands of children had been abducted in raids permitted by the government. The group said that one of its officials, John Eibner, in October had managed to buy the freedom of 58 slaves, who told him they were forced to assume a Moslem identity and were often beaten. (Reuters)

Egypt has set its next target

ANALYSIS
PINHAS INBARI

AT the Cairo Economic Conference last week, Egypt succeeded in achieving its main target: To emphasize its pivotal role in the Middle East at the expense of Israel.

Egypt tried to exclude Israel from the regional economic enterprises, and to limit it only to the bilateral tracks.

This is why Egypt manifested a chilly attitude towards the Israeli politicians who came to seek a political role for Israel, but smiled at the Israeli businessmen who came to invest directly in Egypt without seeking a regional role in the economy of the Middle East.

At the same time, we may notice the nature of the Egyptian enterprises that were presented to the conference. The areas that Egypt is primarily interested in developing are Upper Egypt and

the Western Desert.

This was a placatory signal about the future intentions of Egypt: namely to pursue economic policy in order to underscore its political role as a Middle East superpower, to conceal latent threats of war.

Those threats, however, were bigger a few years ago when Egypt presented economic development programs to the World Bank, that focused on Sinai. Under heavy pressures from the American side, Egypt withdrew its plan to settle the peninsula adjacent to the borders with Israel with millions of Egyptian peasants re-settled to the Sinai from the overcrowded Nile Valley.

Such an economic development plan threatened the stability of Sinai as a buffer zone with Israel - which is the core of the security aspect of the Camp

David agreements.

This economic plan was also to indicate that the main Egyptian drive in its Middle Eastern politics was towards the East, the Mashreq, that is to say Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine and Israel.

This was not welcomed by either Israel or the Arab countries, except for the Palestinian Authority - which is oow the most pro-Egyptian actor in the Middle East.

Changing the economic plans embodies the beginning of changing the political interests, towards Sudan, which is adjacent to Upper Egypt, and Libya, near the Western Desert.

For now Egypt still tries to play the pivotal role in the Mashreq -

that's why it gives prominence to its relations with the Palestinian Authority.

But once the development programs Egypt presented to the conference begin to take shape, its interest in the Palestinians will decrease.

Egypt will become a more African and Maghrib-oriented state, leaving the Palestinians to handle their relations with their Israeli and Jordanian neighbors alone.

As for now, Egypt is Syria's main ally in the area, and this alliance is going to continue for some time, but the emphasis Egypt is going to give to the Upper Egypt and the Western Desert will, in the long run, affect its relations with Syria as well.

The beginning of this development started three years ago at the first Middle East Economic

Conference in Casablanca.

According to a recent lecture given by Hani al-Hasan, one of the PNA heads, at the Center for Palestinian Research and Studies in Nablus, during the Casablanca Conference the USA convened a security summit between themselves, Israel and Turkey.

Egypt was denied entrance to that meeting, and Cairo's efforts to establish its predominance in the area stemmed from the fear that Turkey may replace it as the pivotal Moslem country.

Turkey became the joint enemy of Cairo and Damascus. But, as Egypt decided to concentrate on economic enterprises that will lead it to ultimately withdraw from the Mashreq, Syria will be left alone to deal with the Israeli and the Turkish challenges.

The question remaining is, how many crises are still ahead of us until this reality materializes?



King Hussein of Jordan inspects Bedouin guards of honor upon his arrival at parliament for the first meeting after its suspension over the summer during bread riots. (Reuters)

Lebanon's double-billing misery: Pay for electricity, then pay again

RODEINA KENAAN

PAYING the monthly bills is painful anywhere. In Beirut, it's twice as bad.

As Lebanon recovers from decades of war and disruption, the government is again charging regularly for water, electricity and phone services - even if it can't always provide them.

Entrepreneurs are stepping in to fill the gap, and residents yearning for normal life are footing the bill.

"I have a telephone at home but since it rained, it's not working," said resident Helen Jabra. "The only reason I have a cellular phone is because I cannot rely on my home phone."

Since two companies set up cellular-phone networks last year, 185,000 customers have signed up, most in Beirut where a third of Lebanon's three million people live. It costs \$500 to get hooked up, plus \$500 to \$900 for the phone, and then come the monthly bills.

Many people also depend on

private generators when city electricity fails. The average cost per household is about \$100 monthly for both services.

Jabra's home, which she shares with her businessman husband and two daughters, is also connected to a private water source for \$50 a month. That's in addition to the average \$7 a month for city water. "It's nice to have constant running water," said Jabra. "I have never complained about how much I have to pay for it."

Since electricity, water, and trash-collection services are billed like a tax, residents have no choice but to pay the government for them, even if they don't work. As for phones, many residents keep paying government bills just to keep the lines, which often take years to install.

The luxury of private services isn't available to all. The minimum wage in Lebanon is \$300,000 (\$200) monthly. The average monthly salary is probably \$300 to \$400, though more exact figures are unavailable.

Still, the private companies attract customers sick of haphazard municipal services and oo services at all during the the 1975-90 civil war.

Then, water was regularly cut, electricity was rationed to six hours daily, and garbage piled up in street bins until angry residents set it afire to get rid of the stench.

Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's reconstruction plan, launched in 1992, has earmarked \$2 billion to improve public services. Under the plan, roads and sidewalks are being rebuilt, traffic lights

installed, pipes laid and cables connected.

By December 31, some 600,000 new telephone lines are scheduled to be available throughout Lebanon, and the Telecommunications Ministry promises more than a million lines by the end of 1997.

Until then, companies like the United Business Co. will have a booming market.

The company, which picks up garbage at people's houses instead of the street bins used by the city's collectors, has signed up 5,000 clients in six months. The monthly fee is \$13, in addition to \$7 per month each household must pay the city. The company is expanding to suburban towns. "We're collecting garbage from homes because the municipalities don't," said company accountant Pierre al-Mir. "We're doing a service that is lacking, and people are happy." (AP)



Iran's answer to Barbie? A doll called Sara, dressed in the traditional modest garb of Islam, is displayed at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Adults in Teheran. She was created for the purpose of resisting western-style dolls. (AP)

Algeria seeks ways to feed its people

ALGERIA, which boasts an improving economy, is looking into ways of ensuring its people receive basic essentials, Trade Minister Bakhti Belaib said earlier this month.

"Organizing the supply to markets of basic essentials forms one of the priorities at the present moment," he told representatives of the General Union of Traders and Algerian Artisans.

He also promised to draw up a list of imported basic essentials. But a local education group said children in its area had no drinking water, electricity or heating in their schools.

Algeria is the world's highest importer of hard wheat and imports huge quantities of sugar. Total annual spending on importing basic food essentials runs at around \$2.5 billion.

The North African country's cabinet said in September that imports of basic foods had been cut by 29 percent in the past year - in part because of a better harvest, but also because of "the contraction of [Algerians'] purchasing power."

Algeria has also for years suffered from gangs buying up subsidized basic essentials like flour and sugar and then smuggling them out of the country, leaving many of its

29 million people facing either shortages or high black-market prices.

Many subsidies have oow been lifted or the amount reduced, but smuggling has continued.

Finance Minister Abdelkrim Harchaoui said 12,000 tons of perished foodstuffs had been seized by customs in the first half of this year.

He said, however, there had been a "clear improvement" in the situation at the frontiers through which were smuggled huge quantities of subsidized products - sugar, milk, edible oil and semolina. (Reuters)

Turkey seizes heroin worth \$41m.

TURKISH security forces have seized heroin worth more than \$40 million in two drug raids and one consignment was found in dried dung, the state-run Anatolian news agency said on Monday.

Five people were detained in connection with the seizure of 195 kg of the drug, estimated to be worth three trillion Turkish lira (\$30 million), from a house in southeastern Hakkari province on Sunday.

Gendarmes raided the house in Yuksekova after a tip-off and found the heroin hidden in dried dung, the agency said.

It said the seized drugs were to be taken to the eastern province of Van.

In Van, a further 74 kg of heroin worth \$11.4 million was seized. Turkey is a major transit point for heroin brought to from Asia for shipment to western Europe. In 1995, Turkish security forces seized 3.4 tonnes of heroin, more than fifth of the worldwide haul.

The parliament in Ankara last week passed a law aimed at curbing money laundering as part of the country's fight against drug smuggling. (Reuters)

Egyptians find tombs of six princes

EGYPTIAN archaeologists have found the tombs of six Old Kingdom princes at the Nile Delta site of Tell Basta, an ancient provincial capital best known for its mummified-cat cemeteries.

The tombs contain parts of a human mummy and some of the gold foil from the case which covered it, the Supreme Council for Antiquities said in a statement on Monday. Other finds include three offering tables, a fine headdress made of marble and three false doors, one of them inscribed with the name of Ithi, apparently one of the princes, it said. False doors are a traditional feature of Pharaonic burials.

Ithi had administrative and funerary titles well known from the Old Kingdom, which lasted from about 2600 to 2180 BCE.

The site, known in ancient times as Per Bastet after the cat goddess Bastet, lies 65 km northeast of Cairo, near the modern town of Zagazig. The council said the archaeologists were a joint mission from the council and Zagazig University. They have been working at the site for four months. (Reuters)



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When boys shouldn't confront female nudity

PARENTING
RUTH MASON

In my neighborhood pool, mothers often bring their sons up to the age of four or five into the women's changing room. This seems to me not to be in the best interests of the child. In fact, I think it's a subtle form of sexual abuse. I'm sure we wouldn't bring our five-year-old daughters into the men's locker room.

At what age should parents stop bringing their children into a dressing room of the opposite sex? Alan Flashman, M.D., pediatrician and child psychiatrist who practices in Beersheba, answers: In many families, mothers do not conceal themselves from their sons at the age of four and that seems to be something with which boys can cope with. But the idea of a four- or five-year-old being confronted with female nudity on a mass scale probably puts too much of a burden on the child. It is unlikely he would be able to express any embarrassment, bewilderment or excitement that he may feel and so the mother would not be easily able to figure out what is happening to her child.



Reuma Weizman (l) plays guide for Vivien Clore Duffield, chairwoman of the Clore Foundation at Yad Sarah. (Sara Uziel)

Better never than late

GRAPEVINE
GREER FAY CASHMAN

Education Minister Zevulun Hammer missed the plane taking him to Tel Aviv to see Boker for the memorial ceremony marking the anniversary of David Ben-Gurion's death. The army offered to take him by helicopter, but a few minutes into the flight, Hammer realized he wasn't going to make it in time, and asked the pilot to turn back. The service was marked by the death of Labor MKs, and the word from the seething Labor ranks was that they had not received invitations. But Yariv Ben-Eliezer, the most vocal of the first prime minister's grandchildren, was there, and so was the present prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who, as usual, walked hand in hand with Sara.

AND FORMER GSS chief and current Celcom president Ya'acov Peri, who is also in high demand, seldom refuses an invitation, now that he's emerged from the world of the shadows. Peri has just accepted the chairmanship of WZO Israel's 1997 NIS 6 million fund-raising appeal.

DISDAINING THE use of the microphone at the British Emma dinner co-hosted by Pina Herzog and Della Worms, former Jerusalem Post editor David Bar-Ilan, who is also an internationally acclaimed concert pianist and now serves as director of policy planning and communications in the Prime Minister's Office, ooted "I used to play the piano without a microphone and I'm going to talk without a microphone." And indeed he didn't need one, though his audience, which included Elaine Sacks, wife of the chief rabbi of the British Commonwealth, and Lady Jakobovits, wife of the chief rabbi emeritus, would have preferred a more rosy picture of the future. Nonetheless, they were partially reassured when Bar-Ilan pledged "We are not going to sacrifice the safety of Israelis for the sake of the [Oslo] agreement."

ALTHOUGH THEY support numerous social welfare, educational, binational and cultural causes, philanthropists Yuli and Ruti Ofer, somehow by-passed the Friends of Tel Aviv University, until FTAU president Raya Jaglom, whose fund-raising achievements are legend, persuaded them otherwise. Their first TAU benefit was a gala evening featuring the Moiseyev Dance Company from Moscow.

THE 500 tickets sold will go a long way towards providing scholarships. When she first saw the Moiseyev dancers in Moscow in 1964, she never imagined that she would see them in Israel at a performance on behalf of Tel Aviv University, said Jaglom, who together with Ruti Ofer chatted in fluent Russian to the company's artistic director and choreographer Igor Moiseyev. Benno Gitter, chairman of the TAU Board of Governors, who specially came back from New York for the occasion, observed that although he and Ofer had not always seen eye to eye in their previous dealings, they were definitely in accord on matters pertaining to TAU.

WHEN THE wife of the chief rabbi issues an invitation, one has to have a very good excuse to refuse. Thus it came as no surprise that Rabbi Hila Lau had a full house when she invited a broad mosaic of Israeli society to commit themselves in some way to Ezer Mizion, a Bnei Brak headquartered organization which gives every possible kind of assistance to the sick and the aged 365 days a year, 24 hours around the clock - gratis. Among those present were Reuma Weizman, Jill Indyk, Nagwa Bassiouny, Kenna Shoval, MK Naomi Blumenthal, Ariella Turner, Leora Kini, Micki Mazar, Hila Rahav, Elana Rozenman and Bracha Zisser, who together with her husband, investment tycoon Moshe Zisser, has financed the construction of Oranit, a hostel in Petah Tikva for children with cancer. Some of the 70 or so women present wept as Keren Simal, a now healthy, beautiful young mother, recounted what Ezer Mizion had done for her and her family when she was stricken with cancer at age 15.

Reuma Weizman, lamenting the rifts which are sundering the nation, commended Rabbi Lau for bringing such a diverse group together, and observed that "volunteerism is one of the things which can unite us." Binyamina Sherman, Ezer Mizion's dynamic volunteer public-relations officer, was able to generate enthusiasm without mentioning that she happens to be a mother of 10 and a grandmother of four, and also gives her time to other causes as well as Ezer Mizion.

AS A rule, Reuma Weizman is on the receiving end of explanations when she visits social-welfare facilities. But in the case of Yad Sarah, where she herself is a volunteer, Weizman is an expert, who very articulately tells the story

In search of better town management

The image of local authorities is changing dramatically after years of being considered the dregs of Israeli politics, Yosef Goell writes



Forum participants included (from left), Eli Gabai of Lakha, David Efrati of Hura, Wahib Nasser A-Din Kasr Samia, Zvika Ma Yafit of Oranit, and David Kooler of Kohav Yair.

IMAGINE, if you will, a conference room in a posh hotel with 45 or so animated and self-important men, half of them reaching furtively to respond to the insistent shrill beeping of their cellular phones, and the other half just as impatiently shushing them up. This was a typical scene at the 13th meeting of the Lyn P. Meyerhoff 21st Century Forum of Israeli Mayors and Heads of Local Authorities held in Caesarea at the end of October.

Local government was, for a long time, considered the most problematic sector of Israel's public administration. Many local authorities were beset by perpetual infighting among a myriad of factions, and between the council and the mayor who was elected from within its ranks. Many local authorities were also a hotbed of corruption - petty and major - and of ethnic and clan politics at their worst.

A major step forward came in the late 1970s, with the adoption of the law for the direct election of mayors. The main achievement of that reform seems to have been in the quality of the candidates attracted to municipal office and in the political stability accorded to heads of local authorities between elections.

The direct election of the heads of local authorities, however, did not automatically improve the quality of the administration of those bodies. It apparently takes quite a long time to learn how to be an effective mayor of a modern community.

This is where the 21st Century Forum comes in. Its underlying purpose is to facilitate the development of a competent municipal leadership predicated on the conviction that in an increasingly decentralized Israel, local government will play a key and growing role in defining the everyday quality of life for nearly all Israelis.

The 21st Century Forum of Mayors is funded by the Meyerhoff Foundation of Baltimore, with JDC-Israel (through its ELKA management training arm), the Sikkuy association for the advancement of equal opportunity and the Ministry of Interior as partners. Membership of the forum, which was founded in 1994, is voluntary, and today comprises about 80 out of the 160 heads of local authorities.

Forum activities have included four plenary sessions a year, of two to three days each, attended by an average of 40 or so participants, as well as several smaller working sessions of two to three hours each. There also was a "study tour" to a number of US municipalities - my impression was that that was pretty much a

junket. Nearly all the members are from small to medium-sized localities. None of the big city mayors, or those from other towns with 100,000 or more residents, have joined - with the recent exception of the mayor of Holon. Apparently, these big-city mayors are either too busy - although evidence indicates that small-town mayors tend to be much busier, harassed and accessible to complaining constituents - or much more likely, much fuller with a sense of their self-importance to admit that there is anything that they have to, or could, learn from participation in such get-togethers.

Slightly over 40 percent of the members are new heads of local authorities in their first term of office. Seventy percent are Jews, and 30 percent are heads of Arab or Druse communities. My impression in speaking to a cross-section of the participants was that it is specifically the new mayors and the Arabs, and Druse who are most ready to admit that they have much to learn, and are ready to spend the

time and effort to do so. The fact that there were no women participants is a reflection of the sorry situation that there are only two women heads of local authorities out of a total of 160.

EACH OF the plenary sessions is planned around a major topic. The one I attended last month had a clearly focused topic: Mediation as an alternative strategy to conflict management and resolution in local government (see story below).

Many of the topics at previous meetings, however, seem to have been much more diffuse and problematic as regards the feasibility of their application in the day-to-day working lives of the mayors. These included: Heads of local authorities - leaders in an era of change; Effectiveness in local government; Development and administration of public policy, and the like.

One of the important contributions of projects funded by well-run foreign foundations like the Meyerhoff Foundation is that

they insist on follow-up assessments of the achievements of the projects they initiate. For this purpose the forum has been monitored by the local Pilat company by means of questionnaires distributed to the participant mayors and follow-up interviews with them.

In an assessment report of the forum's achievements to date, the Pilat assessors found that 70 to 90 percent of the participants expressed great satisfaction with the forum sessions while a full 100 percent said that it was important to them to continue participating in these sessions. Much of this self-assessment follow-up revolves around such terms as "vision," "long-term planning," and other mantras of the discipline of public administration.

Vision talk is heady stuff, as we read in connection with recent US presidential campaigns, and so is "long-term planning."

But it is extremely difficult to assess how participants exposed to such "visionizing" actually are guided by it in their daily work.

Seeking those 'win-win' solutions

THE keynote address at the Mayors' Forum was the talk by Professor Moti Mironi of Tel Aviv University's law faculty, on "Mediation as a tool in conflict resolution."

He argued that the common model used for conducting negotiations was not very effective. It was too competitive, too aggressive and power-oriented and often worsened the relations between the conflicting sides, a very important consideration in situations - such as in families and communities - in which the disputants had to continue living with each other.

Courts, he said, were just as ineffective. Because they were so tied to legal procedures and restraints of the adversarial process, judges were often incapable - and often not legally permitted - to come up with innovative and effective solutions to conflicts.

In the US, he noted, 85 percent of all civil court cases were never adjudicated but submitted to some sort of negotiations or mediation. In Israel, the figure was 70 percent of all cases. Besides which, the courts were so overloaded that it often took over five years for a case to come up for a hearing.

Small claims courts were just as ineffective. To illustrate what he meant by "innovative" solutions, Mironi told an old story about Moshe Dayan. That world-renowned war hero was also an archeology buff who frequently bought ancient artifacts

from dealers. Dayan was equally renowned for not paying his debts to dealers. One such dealer was getting frantic about what to do about Dayan's mounting debt. Dayan finally suggested to the dealer that he give him a large number of post-dated checks in payment, which the dealer promised not to cash immediately.

In fact, the dealer never cashed the checks, but sold them to foreign tourists who were overjoyed to pay a premium for a Dayan autograph on a check which they framed in their living room rather than cashing it. At this point, one of the mayors who had known Dayan noted dryly that had the usually wily Dayan been on his toes he would have eliminated the dealer and sold his own autographed checks.

Mironi urged the mayors to consider mediation in which a trained mediator is brought in to come up with innovative "win-win" solutions to conflicts that would benefit all sides to the dispute, as part of a panoply of alternate dispute resolution methods. The ensuing simulation game on mediation was less impressive. A good part of the problem in translating theory into practice was that the simulation mediator insisted on making the mayor himself one of the sides to the dispute, whereas the political electee was vitally interested to appear as the man who had come up with the solution. Y.G.

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Stocks rise on Meridor speech, banks' gains

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

FELICE MARANZ



STOCKS rose after two days of losses, boosted by banking shares, which gained after better-than-expected earnings and news of a share purchase.

US investor Jeffrey Keil for a price 3% to 4% above Monday's share price.

Statements by Finance Minister Dan Meridor that he may seek additional reductions in the 1997 budget by up to NIS 2 billion also prompted rising shares prices.

Bank Hapolim was the most active share on the exchange, rising 2.25% as NIS 4.7m. of shares changed hands.

The Maof index of 25 issues rose 1.17 percent to 204.74 and the Mishanin index of 100 issues rose 1.11% to 195.23.

Other bank shares that gained included First International Bank of Israel, which rose 0.25%. First International had jumped as much as 2.5% after it said third-quarter net income rose 63%.

Of 976 shares trading across the exchange, 13 shares rose for every 10 that fell.

Bank Leumi was up 1.75% and Israel Discount Bank gained 2.5%.

Meridor made his remarks in Jerusalem at an annual seminar held in memory of finance minister employees killed in the Yom Kippur War.

Other risers included Tadiran Ltd., which said Monday third-quarter net income gained 8.5%.

Banking shares surged after the Histadrut said it is in talks to sell its 3% stake in Bank Hapolim to

Tadiran's parent, Koor Industries, also gained, rising 0.75%.

Additional NIS 2b. from the budget came as a surprise and lifted shares," said Avi Meir, investment manager at Israel General Bank.

Chemical companies rebounded after two days of losses following lower-than-expected earnings from another Koor subsidiary, Maktchimim Chemical Works.

Babbling shares surged after the Histadrut said it is in talks to sell its 3% stake in Bank Hapolim to

Maktchimim rose 2.75%, Israel Chemicals was up 0.5%, and Dead Sea Bromine gained 0.25%.

Bezeq rose 1.5% after company officials said they held meetings with Egyptian communications officials regarding joint ventures.

Bezeq rose 1.5% after company officials said they held meetings with Egyptian communications officials regarding joint ventures.

Eurobourses edge up, boosted by US gains

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - The stock market ended on a firm note as an unexpected rise on Wall Street dragged share prices higher.

The broad SPI index was up 2.89 points to 2,486.55.

The FTSE 100 share index, which spent much of the day becalmed around 3,960 points on worries about next week's budget and interest rates, tracked the US market reluctantly higher to close at 3,978.1, up 16 points on the day.

TOKYO - Stocks closed higher, after fluctuating in no particular direction amid light trading volume.

FRANKFURT - Shares ended bourse dealings very slightly firmer after fluctuating around Monday's close for most of the session, held back by newcomer Deutsche Telekom, which ended heavy trading lower as players took profits.

Deutsche Telekom traded in heavy volume, but they closed lower than the initial price and failed to inspire.

The 30-share DAX closed up 0.25 points at 2,764.09. In post-bourse trade the index stood at 2,781.30.

The key Nikkei 225 average gained 159.81 points to close at 20,956.18.

PARIS - Shares rose at the end of the trading session, after a firm Wall Street opening, to recapture all the ground they lost yesterday, leaving the market in slightly bullish shape.

HONG KONG - The Hang Seng index scored another record closing high, but ended well off its intraday record high as a strong rally fizzled during the afternoon on fears of a share placement.

The CAC-40 index closed up 11.24 points or 0.5 percent at 2,240.05.

SYDNEY - Shares closed lower as early weakness in WMC and Coca-Cola Amatil was exacerbated in the afternoon by profit-taking in resource leaders.

ZURICH - Shares followed US markets higher to close a costly week slightly firmer in active trade. But dealers said the consolidation which began Monday was likely to continue for a few more days.

The All Ordinaries index closed down 17.8 points to 2,366.0.

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (AP) - Stocks resumed their record-setting march yesterday, led again by IBM, as interest rates fell in the bond market amid more signs of a moderating economy that may keep inflation in check.

JOHANNESBURG - Shares established their fine by noon and stood by it, finishing frail but off the day's most sickly levels.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 50.69 points to close at 6,397.60, rallying into the close to nearly pierce the 6,400-mark for the first time.

Dealers said the consolidation which began Monday was likely to continue for a few more days.

Stocks traced the moves of the bond market most of the day, opening higher and then pulling back temporarily in the afternoon.

Enthusiasm over the housing starts data was compounded by separate reports from two private research groups showing weaker retail sales this month.

Bonds started higher after the government reported that construction of new homes and apartments fell 5.1% in October to 1.37 million, the lowest level

in a year. Many analysts had expected housing starts to increase slightly due to lower mortgage rates and continued strong sales.

The report reinforced other recent signs that business activities may be slowing enough to contain inflationary pressures such as higher production costs without an interest rate hike by the Federal Reserve.

Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by nearly a 7-to-5 margin on the New York Stock Exchange, with 1,441 up, 1,039 down and 851 unchanged.

FRANKFURT

Table of Frankfurt stock market data including indices like DAX, EURO STOXX, and various individual stocks with their prices and changes.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

Table showing currency cross-rates for MARK, STERLING, YEN, SFY, and FFI.

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Main table of Tel Aviv stocks, categorized into Commercial Banks, Industrials, Mortgage Banks & Finance, Financial Institutions, Trade & Services, Property, Building & Agriculture, Oil Exploration, and PARALLEL LIST Trade & Services Property, Building & Agriculture. Includes columns for Name, Price, Change, and Volume.

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INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

Large table of international stock prices, organized by region: NEW YORK, CHICAGO, LONDON, EUROPEAN, ASIA, AUSTRALIA, and others. Lists various companies and their stock prices.



Key Representative Rates table showing exchange rates for U.S. Dollar, Sterling, and German mark against the NIS.

INTEL MONEY MARKETS table showing dollar crossrates and labor rates.

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd. Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds.

INTEL COMMODITIES AND METALS table showing US commodities and London commodities.

Spot market metals (US) table showing prices for various metals.

New York metal futures table showing prices for gold, silver, and copper.

London metal fixes table showing prices for gold, silver, and copper.

J'lem proceeds with plans for 2 neighborhoods

BILL HUTMAN

THE Jerusalem Municipality is moving ahead with plans to construct two new neighborhoods along Emek Arazin, despite the sharp opposition of environmentalists to the development of the last unspoiled stretch of valley at the city's western entrance, city officials said yesterday.

The municipality wants to build one haredi and one secular neighborhood on separate hillsides in the valley, which lies below Mevasseret Zion, Ramot, and the abandoned Arab village of Lifa, the officials said.

They outlined the plans before Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush, who was a guest of city hall yesterday.

Mayor Ehud Olmert rejected the opposition of environmentalists, saying the municipality is sticking to the long-standing policy of not building in valleys, as the new neighborhoods are slated for hillsides, and not the valley itself.

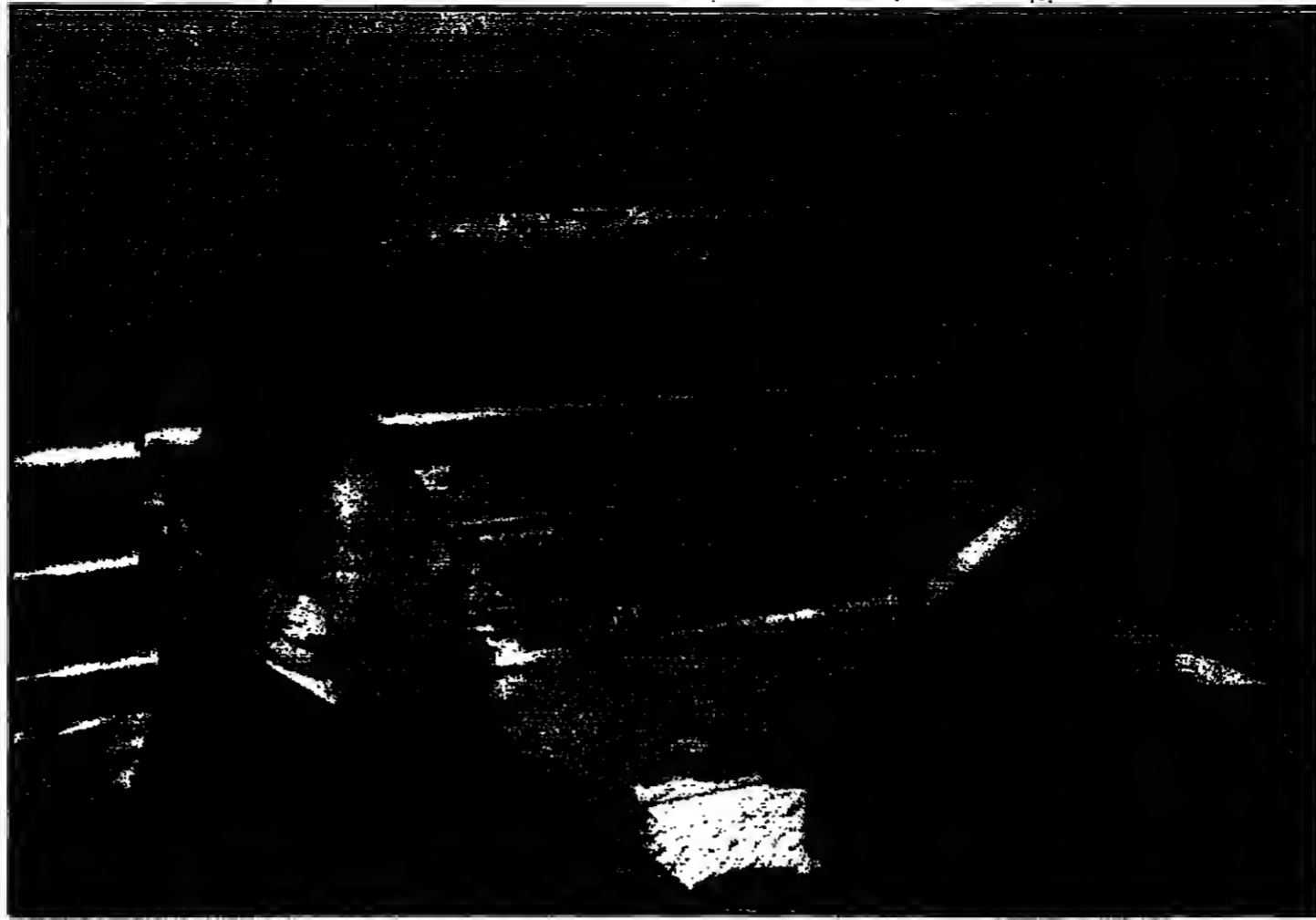
Porush, who was taken by Olmert to an overlook of the Emek Arazin, also expressed support for the project. "I think that we will see here soon - that is, after a couple of years - two beautiful neighborhoods," Porush said.

Olmert said the new neighborhoods are necessary to ease the city's housing shortage. The haredi neighborhood is to include some 2,200 units on Givat Alona, and the secular neighborhood about 3,500 units at Mitzpeh Nakofa, city engineer Uri Ben-Asher said.

The city wants the government to agree to fund the construction of a tunnel under Emek Arazin to protect the natural landscape of the valley, Ben-Asher said. Otherwise, the proposed road will cut straight through the valley, he said.

Ben-Asher said the city is finalizing an environmental study of the Emek Arazin development plans, and that afterwards the plans would be prepared for approval by the various zoning and building boards.

The proposed development of Emek Arazin has been a heated topic in recent years. Environmentalists have fought hard to protect the little remaining green areas in the Jerusalem Corridor, while city officials lobbied for new construction to meet housing needs.



Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert (right) yesterday shows Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush an overview of Emek Arazin at the western entrance to the capital.

Meanwhile, city officials also revealed yesterday that NIS 800,000 have been budgeted for the planning of the controversial Eastern Gate project, that if approved would necessitate expropriation of Arab-owned lands.

The Eastern Gate project, which is to include some 2,000 homes for Jewish families and a technological park is to cover an area between Pisgat Ze'ev, the Ma'aleh Adumim highway, and A-Zayim village.

The project was first proposed in the late 1980s, when Ariel Sharon served as housing minister. Olmert has repeatedly said he supports moving ahead with construction there as soon as possible.

On Monday, ministry officials met with officials of the State Attorney's Office and decided that Suissa's authority over the Har Homa plan would be transferred to Yishai.

WEATHER

Area	Temp	Conditions
Heb	18-22	clear
Tel Aviv	17-20	cloudy
Jerusalem	12-19	clear
Bethlehem	12-20	clear
Dead Sea	19-23	clear
Yotvata	12-20	clear
Be'er Sheva	19-23	clear
Haifa	18-22	clear
Haifa Bay	18-22	clear

Forecast: Possible rain.

AROUND THE WORLD

Low			
Area	Temp	Wind	Conditions
Amsterdam	04	05	rain
Berlin	09	08	cloudy
Brussels	06	06	cloudy
Geneva	14	07	clear
London	07	07	cloudy
Madrid	11	07	clear
Moscow	02	07	cloudy
Paris	06	07	cloudy
Rome	04	07	rain
Sofia	04	07	rain
Zurich	02	07	rain

Ben-Porat declines to investigate opening of Western Wall Tunnel exit

EVERLYN GORDON

THE Knesset State Control Committee yesterday decided not to force State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat to investigate the opening of a new exit to the Western Wall Tunnel, after Ben-Porat made it clear that she did not want the job.

Six weeks ago, when MK Moshe Shahal (Labor) first proposed asking Ben-Porat to prepare a report on the matter, Ben-Porat said she doubted the matter was appropriate for the state comptroller's scrutiny, because it was too political. After three lengthy committee discussions on the matter, Ben-Porat said she saw no reason to change her mind.

However, she added, the general issue of how any government agencies make decisions has always been, and will continue to be, on her agenda.

In light of Ben-Porat's reluctance, opposition MKs - who constitute a majority of the committee - decided not to compel her, though legally the committee can demand that she prepare an opinion on any subject it chooses. Shahal said this decision was due to their "respect and admiration" for Ben-Porat and their firm belief that she will of her own accord investigate any government decision that seems to have been improperly made.

Both Shahal and committee chairman Ran Cohen (Meretz) said that after listening to the testimony of various ministers and representatives of the security services, they were convinced that there had been several serious flaws in the government's decision-making process. Too many people were neither consulted nor even given sufficient notice of the decision to open an exit to the tunnel, they said, and intelligence assessments were either not sought or ignored. The fact that the army was neither consulted nor informed was particularly severe, they said.

Shahal said a particularly surprising discovery was the major role Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert played in the decision to open the tunnel exit. Olmert was involved in all the discussions on the issue and had pushed for the opening aggressively, he said, while several key ministers, such as Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, claimed to have been left out of the loop.

Ben Gurion Airport security implore Kahalani to increase manpower

HAINA MARCUS

AIRPORT police and security personnel have a difficult time keeping up with foreigners disguised as tourists, who actually intend to work here illegally, Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani was told yesterday during a tour of Ben Gurion Airport.

Airport workers told Kahalani their workload is too great to enable them to make thorough checks on tourists.

Some newspapers recently accused airport personnel, including police, of failing to recognize forged passports and allowing people who come here to work to enter on tourists visas.

One policeman, who has worked at the airport for 15 years, told Kahalani the main problem was with foreign workers, because they are hard to recognize. If passport-control police notice a suspicious person, they call for back up and question the

traveler. But according to the policewoman, representatives of the Interior Ministry should be stationed at the airport to help overworked staff deal with the problem of foreign workers.

Another policewoman, Hadas Sasson, told Kahalani additional police presence is required at the airport, which has its own station. Sometimes, she said, the mostly female passport-control staff feel physically threatened by drunken tourists.

Central District Police Chief Cmdr. Shlomo Aharonitsky and the airport director Shaul Hazan basted Kahalani during his tour of the airport.

Ben Gurion airport services some eight million travelers each year. That causes long queues for passengers who are subject to stringent security procedures. The

Knesset has approved separate security arrangements for Israeli and foreign citizens, but Kahalani said that because of "technical problems" this has not yet been implemented.

Regarding the list of 33 alleged Russian mafiosi who are banned from entry, Kahalani said that police have information about them and their photos and would be able to catch them even if they used forged passports to re-enter Israel.

"There are around 2,500 such persons on our computers," said Aharonitsky. Fake passports are hard to detect, but police recently purchased a special computerized lighting system that is supposed to detect forgeries, he said.

The equipment, however, is not the most advanced and Kahalani admitted foreigners are becoming more sophisticated. "Forgeries will not stop," he said.

Suissa hands Har Homa issue to Yishai

BILL HUTMAN

JERUSALEM city officials said yesterday they expect a go-ahead soon for the controversial Har Homa project, following the decision to transfer the final say on the project from Interior Minister Eli Suissa to Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai.

However, project opponents, led by developer David Meir, said that even if Yishai approves the present plan, they will continue their fight against it in the courts and hold up work.

At issue is the plan to build a

new Jewish neighborhood on land annexed to Jerusalem in 1967 on the city's southeastern border. The interior minister normally has final say on such projects. However Suissa, in his previous post as chairman of the district planning committee, already took a stand in favor of the plan, thus conflict-of-interest considerations forbid him from also giving final approval.

On Monday, ministry officials met with officials of the State Attorney's Office and decided that Suissa's authority over the Har Homa plan would be transferred to Yishai.

The move must go before the Knesset, and this is likely to happen today, according to a spokesman for Yishai.

City officials said they believe Yishai will sign the plan "within several days," allowing for the start of construction on the new Jewish neighborhood, unless a court decides otherwise.

Winning cards and numbers

The winning numbers in last night's Loto draw were 46, 29, 28, 25, 18 and 14. The additional number was 36.

In yesterday's daily Chance draw the winning cards were the queen of spades, nine-of-hearts, queen of diamonds and queen of clubs.

IAF rocket lands near kibbutz children's house

A TARGET-MARKING rocket filled with explosives fell from an Israeli helicopter onto Kibbutz Gat yesterday morning, where it exploded, narrowly missing the children's house.

Police sappers quickly arrived and examined the crater left by the rocket, which was up less than 100 meters from the children's house.

It was partly destroyed, but no one from the kibbutz was hurt.

Rahel Gal, kibbutz spokeswoman, said that the rocket landed on a tree and exploded, "like a plane, and then there was an explosion." Kibbutz chairman Nahshon Shalev said, "The IAF is investigating yesterday's incident, and not to fly over the area."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Soldier treated for rabies
A soldier is being treated in an isolation ward of Hadera's Hillel Yoffe hospital on suspicion he might be suffering from rabies. Hospital director Dr. Meir Orni said although there was no specific proof, staff were treating the soldier on the basis he had contracted rabies.

The soldier was bitten by an unidentified wild animal while serving on the Golan about a month ago. It is not certain, however, if there is a connection between that incident and his illness.

Orni said the soldier was admitted to the hospital on Saturday evening with neurological symptoms that in the "context of the case gave rise to suspicion that this was rabies."

The soldier, who is in serious condition, is being given anti-viral and anti-bacterial medication.

An IDF spokesman said it was not necessary to isolate other troops from the soldier's unit.

David Rudge

Pal supplies contest winner with winning key
The Central District's fraud squad yesterday uncovered a scam in which a Rav Bariah employee helped a friend win a car in a lottery organized by the Rehovot branch of the Shekera Gallery store and his company. Each participant in the lottery received a key, one of which opened a safe containing the jackpot, a NIS 70,000 car. The employee allegedly supplied his friend with the winning key. The two, who have been released on bail, are expected to be charged soon.

Raine Marcus

Woman gives birth by telephone
A 39-year-old Beit Dagan woman gave birth to healthy twin girls at home yesterday - one when she was alone, and the second after a Magen David Adom intensive care unit team arrived.

"The head is already outside. Come quick, I have twins," she screamed into the phone to operator Shaul Salzman. The experienced Magen David staffer tried to calm her and give her instructions. While on the phone, the woman gave a last push and the baby emerged. A few minutes later, the intensive-care team arrived and wrapped the baby. Another baby soon followed. The mother and daughters were brought in good condition to Assaf Harofe Hospital in Tarfita.

Judy Siegel

Safed council calls off strike
The 500 employees of the Safed municipality are to return to work today and schools that were closed for two days will reopen, after the city council called off its week-long strike.

Mayor Moshe Haniya said the decision followed an appeal by Union of Local Authorities Chairman Adi Eldar and the receipt of NIS 4 million from the Interior Ministry.

"The money will help us to pay the September and October salaries of the employees, but will not solve the overall problem," said Haniya, noting that the council's accumulated debts totalled NIS 35m. "We just hope that this is a sign that the government will try and help us resolve the problem in a more significant way," he added.

David Rudge

Weizman supports memorial day for Rabin
President Ezer Weizman said yesterday that he favors legislation creating a national memorial day to honor prime minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Meretz chairman Yossi Sarid and other party activists met with Weizman in Jerusalem last night to present him with a petition signed by some 100,000 citizens calling for a national memorial day and a copy of the party's bill to that effect, which the Knesset will discuss next month.

"This is not a partisan issue, but a public one," Weizman said. "The bill will come up in the Knesset and I expect it will pass. There was an attempt to kill democracy, the attempt failed and must be remembered."

Ilin

Danon fired as head of Schneider child hospital

JUDY SIEGEL

PROF. Yehuda Danon, a founder and director-general of the Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel, has been dismissed from his post by Kupat Holim Clalit director Avigdor Kaplan.

Danon, a former chief of the IDF Medical Corps, is due to leave his post at the end of December, but will remain director of the pediatric immunology institute he has headed for years.

Clalit, which owns SCMCI, refused to explain last night why Danon was dismissed. Kaplan was abroad and unavailable for comment. Health fund spokeswoman Rabel Bluestein said only that Danon would no longer be hospital director in January next year.

According to a local newspaper report, there has been an ongoing dispute between Kaplan and Danon over unifying some services between SCMCI and the Rabin Medical Center-Beilinson Campus, which is on the same plot

as the six-year-old children's hospital. When established by New York philanthropist Irving Schneider, who donated and collected \$50 million to build the hospital, SCMCI was supposed to be an independent institution. But, according to reports, Kaplan insisted young patients share laboratory and radiology services with Beilinson.

Clalit Chairman Dan Michaeli said the problem was not unification of services but "a lack of trust" between Kaplan and Danon. Danon, who said he was "quite shocked" to be told by Kaplan last week that he had been fired, maintained that such joint supply of services would save only 10 job slots.

Two years ago, Kaplan announced Danon's dismissal, but Schneider vetoed it, according to sources. It is not known whether Schneider, who visits every two weeks and closely supervises the hospital's operations, wants Danon to go this time.

Young hassidim try to steal Rabbi Nahman's remains from Ukraine

THE mission to secretly remove the remains of Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav, an 18th century sage, from his grave in the Ukrainian town of Uman and bring them to Israel.

The method: dig a tunnel under the cemetery.

That's the plan two young Israeli followers of Rabbi Nahman concocted. But they were caught, detained in the Ukraine and sent back home; a rabbi from the Bratslav group said yesterday.

It began last week when the young men rented a room in a house adjacent to the Uman cemetery, and started digging the tunnel toward the small mausoleum where the black stone tomb is located, said Rabbi Nahman Elhadad of the Bratslav group.

Their plan was discovered before they reached the grave, when their landlord became suspicious about the unusual quantity of dust in the room.

Elhadad said Ukrainian police arrested the two suspects, but released them shortly afterwards "for fear of being accused of anti-Semitism." The two young men then flew back to Israel.

Elhadad said he had the tunnel blocked up with concrete "so that nobody else can even try to disturb Nahman's grave."

Rabbi Nahman died in 1811 and is buried in his will to be buried in the old Jewish cemetery in Uman. However, there is a faction of the Bratslav hassidim that believes his remains should be brought to Israel.

Hundreds of members of the Bratslav group from Israel, the US and other Western countries visit his grave every year.

Elhadad refused to disclose the identity of the young men. He said they would be disciplined by the group for their action. "I assume they will be brought before the rabbinical court," he said.

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